



OLD VALUES - NEW HORIZONS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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Planning Board Workshop Approved Minutes

May 13th, 2020

7:00 pm at Community Development Meeting Room & Zoom Video Conference
3 North Lowell Road

Attendance:

Chair, Derek Monson, Present

Vice Chair, Alan Carpenter, Present, via Zoom video conference

Joe Bradley, Present, via Zoom video conference

Jennean Mason, Present, via Zoom video conference

Ruth-Ellen Post, Present, via Zoom video conference

Jacob Cross, Present, via Zoom video conference as of

Matt Rounds (alternate), Present, via Zoom video conference, excused at 8:30

Gabe Toubia (alternate), Present, via Zoom video conference, seated for Mr. Cross until 7:28

Heath Partington, Board of Selectmen liaison, Present, via Zoom video conference

Dick Gregory- Planning Board Director

Renee Mallett- Minute Taker, via video

The workshop opened at 7:12 with the Pledge of Allegiance and the introduction of members. On March 23rd, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, Governor Sununu created Emergency Order #12. This has relaxed the requirements of RSA 91-A, III(c) and allowed the meeting to be held while still following the CDC guidelines for social distancing and the Governor's restrictions on gathering of more than 10 people. As such most of the board members took part via Zoom video conference. The public was given a phone conference number with which to comment or ask questions while the workshop was in session.

The EDC has asked for a member of the Planning Board to serve on that sub-committee. Mr. Toubia is already a citizen member of the EDC. He believes there is a need for a planning board member to serve on a sub-committee overseeing the pipeline and water issues in town. Mr. Partington said that at the last Board of Selectmen meeting it was decided to put a pause on that sub-committee. Mr. Toubia said the EDC was interested in having Ms. Post act as the Planning Board member. Ms. Post said she had a conversation with the EDC Chair and was interested in taking the seat.

Vice Chair Carpenter made a motion to appoint Ms. Post to the EDC. Mr. Toubia seconded the motion. The motion was passed, 6-0-1, with the following roll call vote and Ms. Post abstaining so as not to vote for herself:

Chair Monson, aye

Vice Chair Carpenter, aye

Mr. Bradley, aye

Ms. Mason, aye

44 **Ms. Post, abstain**
45 **Mr. Toubia, aye**
46 **Mr. Partington, aye**
47

48 Ms. DiFruscia's term as an alternate on the board was completed at the beginning of the month. It
49 is unclear if she is interested in continuing as an alternate. There has been one application received from a
50 resident expressing interest in an alternate position. The board will reach out to Ms. DiFruscia to find out
51 her intentions. The applicant will be scheduled for an interview at the next regularly scheduled meeting.
52

53 Chair Monson asked for the board's feedback on the new digital system being used for the meeting
54 packets. Many board members would still like paper plans even if most of the packets are digital.
55

56 **Mr. Cross joined the meeting at 7:28**
57

58 The need for a checklist for each application was raised. It was asked if the documents could be
59 linked to the checklist. Mr. Bradley raised some technical issues with how this might work over time. Chair
60 Monson would like any ZBA variances to be included in the packets. If there are any differences between
61 what the ZBA saw and what the planning board is presented with the ZBA plan should also be included. Mr.
62 Gregory and Ms. Post both clarified that this would only apply to cases where the ZBA plans and the PB
63 plans are different, for the sake of not adding redundancy.
64

65 Ms. Post said that Ms. Crisler had created a checklist last year and that it would be a simple matter
66 to adopt that and tie it in to the digital system. Vice Chair Carpenter wanted to know the board's interest in
67 making it a requirement for more commercial developments to go before Design Review. He would also like
68 to see more clarification on what applications should go before the Conservation Committee.
69

70 Mr. Partington had questions about workforce housing. Chair Monson said the topic had come up
71 on a planning board webinar that day. He said that towns were required to have workforce housing, but he
72 was not clear on how much workforce housing was needed to be legally compliant.

73 Mr. Bradley wanted to develop firmer guidelines for the WWPD. Ms. Mason raised adding more
74 bodies of water into the WWPD.

75 Chair Monson wanted to see what guidelines could be given about maintenance and best practices
76 for things like porous pavement and drainage.

77 Mr. Cross had compiled what was in the master plans of Bedford and Derry, who had both recently
78 updated theirs. He said Windham's master plan was a crisis and thought there should be a sense of urgency
79 in crafting a new one. He felt the current master plan would drastically change the nature of town and
80 require radical rezoning. Mr. Cross said the board should explore long term solutions to keeping master
81 plans current by setting aside money each year to fund future plans while looking at creating a new plan as
82 a more short term solution. He had concerns about the accuracy of online surveys. Mr. Rounds suggested
83 finding out if it could be piggybacked on the election, letting residents take a survey when they go to vote.

84 Chair Monson said that the vision part of the plan came first so they should focus on surveying
85 residents and writing that before branching off.

86 Ms. Post said there were a lot of unknowns right now. The waterline and a TIF district would
87 literally and figuratively change the landscape of Windham. The impact Covid-19 would have on economic
88 development was another unknown. She said that other towns utilized "Planapaloozas" to get town input
89 when making their master plans.

90 Ms. Mason had explored the idea of mass mailings with an included self-addressed stamped
91 envelope. She said a local printer had estimated a rough cost of approximately \$4,000 for this. Ms. Mason

92 had also investigated several online survey options. She suggested that a variety of ways to reach
93 townspeople be used to reach the most diverse demographic, pointing out that only a few hundred out of
94 many thousands had replied to the previous survey.

95 Mr. Cross felt it was imperative that the housing section be edited immediately because it calls for
96 diversifying the housing stock which residents are against. It was pointed out that the vision statement did
97 have to meet some legal obligations and could not just rely solely on the resident input.

98 Mr. Bradley said funding was needed for this kind of overhaul of the master plan. Mr. Cross said
99 there was no funding for it to be done this year.

100 Vice Chair Carpenter said that the previous survey was able to use IP addresses to limit it to
101 responses from Windham residents. He did not think it was impossible but was unlikely that the survey
102 could be strongly impacted by false responses. He suggested Mr. DeLong be brought in to discuss these
103 sorts of options. Vice Chair Carpenter thought that the Board of Selectmen, if they were interested in the
104 project, would be able to fund a mass mailing type survey as presented by Ms. Mason.

105 Some questions followed about a mass mailing. Would it be by household or voting adults? Mr.
106 Toubia suggested that the master plan be staggered and worked on in thirds each year. Vice Chair
107 Carpenter did not think that was drastically different than the way that the board had been updating the
108 plan yearly to this point.

109 Mr. Toubia said that using a local company could save on travel expenses. Ms. Post said that the
110 charettes could be simple potluck dinners. She also questioned the alarm with which the update was being
111 presented. The housing section of the plan had been updated within the last three years by unanimous
112 approval of the board. She did not think that going from 1% rentals in town to 2 or 3% was a significant
113 issue. Ms. Post said it was more alarming that Windham teachers could not afford to live in the same town
114 where they taught. She said the housing plan had been written to be legally compliant and to respond to
115 the needs of young professionals who could not currently find housing stock in town.

116 Chair Monson said the board should explore how to easily reach the most residents of town. Vice
117 Chair Carpenter said that the Department of Business and Economic Affairs (formerly DRED) used to be
118 available to share their forecasts for the state. He said they may have someone who could meet with the
119 board during a Zoom meeting to talk about what the state was seeing for the future of economic
120 development.

121 Mr. Rounds suggested waiting six months so there could be a better idea of what economic
122 development and tax revenues would be. Chair Monson said that the work on the master plan would be a
123 lengthy process and that it made sense to start to explore how to do it and what it might cost.

124 Mr. Cross agreed it was a bad time for commercial development but questioned how much impact
125 there was on the residential side. He asked why the waterline was being referenced when it had been
126 voted down in March. Chair Carpenter explained that a waterline is currently already in process of being
127 built on Rt. 28 to Rt. 111.

128 Mr. Partington said that the town budget was questionable. The Board of Selectmen have no idea
129 what revenues might be or if residents will be able to pay their tax bills. He did not think it was an
130 advantageous time to request funding. He thought starting with the survey was a good first step and that it
131 was prudent to make a plan now for when things became clearer. Mr. Partington felt that previous funding
132 requests did not make a strong case for justifying why the money needed to be spent.

133 Mr. Bradley said he was not confident that the board was in a position to create a truly accurate
134 and scientific survey. He did like the idea of modeling what was seen on the Bedford and Derry surveys. Mr.
135 Cross had compiled those questions along with those from the previous Windham survey. He said it was a
136 very long list, but the board could whittle it down. It was decided that Mr. Cross, Ms. Mason, and Ms. Post
137 would work on editing the survey questions.

138 Chair Monson asked if it would be possible to add a link to the survey to resident tax bills. Mr.
139 Toubia suggested it could be a civics lesson for the town schools to get parents to fill out the survey. Vice

Chair Carpenter said Ms. Bottai should be asked if it was possible to create a ballot style survey that could be read by the voting machines, although that would limit the number of and the nature of the questions that could be asked.

Mr. Toubia recalled that the former survey was very lengthy. Mr. Cross said it was not so much the number of questions but that variety of multiple-choice options they had to answer them.

Chair Monson said he would email the list of topics raised at tonight's workshop to the rest of the board so they could think about what items they would want to work on during the next year. Mr. Gregory cautioned that the list could be emailed but there should not be discussion about it by email. Ms. Mason will work on the checklist.

Mr. Gregory raised the issue of the sign outside the former police department that is now being used by the American Legion. As the application was emailed to the board that same day it was decided to table the matter until the next meeting.

Mr. Toubia asked if the new planning and development books had been printed for the year. Mr. Gregory thought they were in possession of the state planning department, but the town had not received any yet.

Mr. Gregory asked about the life cycle of the digital files. Ms. Mason said that closed cases should be archived in the closed case folder but that all open applications should be left as is.